The internal scan focuses on the following dimensions:

- Build out of the main campus
- Human resources
- Mission differentiation
- Infrastructure
- Organization and administration

**Build out of the main campus**

The main campus currently consists of 58 buildings on 760 acres providing 1.2 million square feet of space supporting 7,200 students, 459 faculty, and 628 staff. The campus master plan indicates that about half of the existing acreage can be developed to support an estimated 20,000 students in the next 15 years. A number of new facilities are currently under construction, including the Library Addition, Academic 5, and Student Activity Center and others are projected to be constructed in the next five years: Engineering, Hospitality and Resort Management, Business, Parking Structure, Mid-Rise Residence Hall and a Performing Arts Center. The university strategic plan calls for enrollment to grow steadily and dramatically over the next decade from its current level of 7,200 to 19,000. While the projected new facilities planned for the next five to ten years could accommodate this rate of growth if built as planned, it is very unlikely that the state funding needed to do so will occur under the state’s current capital funding process. Without the necessary facilities, it will not be possible to realize the enrollment projections contained in the university strategic plan that have been approved by the state. And without the additional enrollment and the enrollment funding that accompanies such growth, the university’s ability to develop new academic programs will be constrained as well as its capacity to meet the needs of the region for higher education. This will have a negative impact on the economic development of SW Florida, and will increase the cost of higher education for the residents of SW Florida who will have to turn to more expensive private alternatives. The university therefore needs to find a way to meet the ambitious enrollment goals it has set while maintaining development of the main campus. The best way to do this is to increase its outreach beyond the main campus where land and facilities are available with demand that is strong and growing.

**Human resources**

Currently, FGCU employs 298 full-time faculty complemented by 161 part-time faculty that is supported by 482 full-time staff and 146 part-time staff. The university strategic plan calls for growth in full-time faculty and staff from 709 in 2004 to 1040 in 2010 to keep in line with enrollment growth. The current staffing levels show that FGCU is on target with its projected growth, but if additional facilities cannot be added rapidly enough, then future growth could be constrained. Current estimates indicate that 43,000 to 79,000 square feet in office space alone (depending on the space factors used to
generate projected need) is required in the next four years if growth is to be sustained as planned. Part of this on-campus growth pressure could be relieved if approximately 50 full-time faculty and staff have principal assignments at regional centers. In order to meet SACS accreditation requirements and to ensure student success, staffing at regional centers needs to cover a full-range of student services, academic support services, and technical services to provide a quality of educational experience (both undergraduate and graduate) comparable to that found on the main campus. This may be accomplished as stated by actually assigning full- and part-time faculty and staff to the regional centers, or by faculty and staff spending part of their time on both the main campus and the regional centers, by cross-training of personnel, and by the use of technology. The actual configuration is dependent upon the mission and scope of services to be provided at each regional center.

**Mission differentiation**

FGCU is currently classified as a Carnegie Master’s I university. It is a comprehensive public university offering 42 baccalaureate degree programs, 19 master’s programs, and 10 certificate programs. Approximately 15 new programs are in various stages of development including the university’s first doctoral programs. The university emphasizes programs in life sciences, the humanities, business, health professions, education, and professional studies to contribute to the diversification of the region’s economy, and to further its civic, cultural, and social development. The university is building new programs in engineering and promotes delivery of its programs through distance learning at one of the highest levels within the state university system.

The variety of its offerings positions the university to meet the diverse needs of local constituencies. The university is currently offering courses leading to degrees in a number of key locations including: Cape Coral, Naples, and Charlotte County. In Cape Coral, local officials are seeking an expanded FGCU presence. The university is exploring a partnership with a charter high school that would allow students to earn an associate degree by graduation. Currently, there are 732 students from Cape Coral enrolled on the main campus that commute (or roughly 10% of the entire student population) more than half of these of traditional college age (i.e., less than 25 years of age). A dual enrollment program could alleviate a significant demand for classroom space on campus and reduce costs to Cape Coral students and the time they spend in traffic commuting. Additional programs will be developed in consultation with Cape Coral officials and the educational leadership of FGCU that can lead to increased opportunities for individuals beyond those targeted for dual enrollment. Moreover, FGCU also offers small business development assistance to Cape Coral through its Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to promote economic development on the Cape.

FGCU-Charlotte has steadily increased its offerings in response to expressed needs of the county’s residents and initial funds provided by them. FGCU-Charlotte also has the potential to serve the growing populations of nearby DeSoto and Sarasota counties. (FGCU has been steadily increasing the number of students from West Central Florida, the region that includes DeSoto and Sarasota counties. Since Fall 2001 the number has
increased from 59 students to just over 230 students in Fall 2005.) Courses leading to degrees in business, health professions (including nursing) education, and professional studies such as public administration, criminal justice, and legal studies are offered, many taking advantage of distance learning. Currently, roughly 4% (268) of FGCU’s enrollment comprises students commuting from Charlotte County. The offering of courses in Charlotte County will greatly enhance accessibility and save students time and money through reduced commuting. Expansion of courses will also reduce space pressures on the main campus. FGCU-Charlotte is expanding its scope to include a broad range of professional opportunities through linkages with its SBDC, its Center for Positive Aging, the Florida Institute of Government, county hospitals, the school district, and the County Bar Association. Environmental concerns and regional tourism will be addressed through FGCU’s Center for Environmental Education and Research intended for development on the Babcock Ranch property. The Renaissance Academy also offers great potential for community enrichment by providing a wide range of cultural and social programming in Charlotte County as it currently does in Collier and Lee Counties.

Collier County is the third major population center currently being served through FGCU’s Naples Center. The Naples Center is home to FGCU’s Renaissance Academy that annually offers 175 different non-credit courses with over 5,000 registrations, and complements its rich continuing education opportunities with a growing number of courses that can lead to degrees in areas such as healthcare and the arts. General education opportunities also can meet a significant need in Collier County. Currently over 800 commuting students (slightly more than 10% of the current student body) under the age of 25 are Collier residents. FGCU is planning a new facility in downtown Naples that will accommodate growth and provide a permanent visible presence in the county. This will be complemented by FGCU’s Research and Educational facility associated with the Naples Botanical Garden and FGCU’s initiatives sited at the Rookery Bay Marine Science Center.

In summary, FGCU envisions further development of regional centers that embrace the comprehensive mission of the university as a whole, but develop individual thrusts that emphasize the needs of the local populations where they are sited. This means that undergraduate as well as graduate programming, along with lifelong learning opportunities, and public service programming will characterize FGCU wherever it is physically present, but that the programming will be customized to offer those features of FGCU best suited to local needs.

Initially, in Cape Coral there is a focus on general education for traditional age students, in Charlotte County, an emphasis on professional programming, and in Collier County efforts will be concentrated on general education, lifelong learning, healthcare, and the arts. Graduate studies could be offered at all three locations depending upon need.

Infrastructure

While FGCU’s current array of physical facilities has limited additional capacity that argues strongly for simultaneous development on its main campus and at strategically
sited regional centers, perhaps FGCU’s greatest strength is its technological infrastructure that boasts a high-speed network backbone, a functionally integrated Enterprise Resource Planning system, interactive video capabilities, an advanced course management system, and a highly automated, Web-accessible, set of library resources. These features provide FGCU with the potential to project programming and services throughout the region, nationally, and beyond. Indeed, as of 2003, 30% of FGCU’s graduate enrollments and 11% of undergraduate enrollments were through students engaged in distance learning. Limiting factors are lack of permanently identified off-campus sites where technological investment and deployment can occur and the local staffing necessary for implementation and maintenance. These challenges can be overcome with additional planning and development.

**Organization and administration**

A major question for consideration is how each regional center should be organized and administered? Initially at least, a strong dependence on the main campus for support is envisioned. This will take the form of telecommunication and IT-mediated contact touching upon all major administrative service units, including: admissions, registrar, financial aid, telecommunications, computing services, information systems, finance and accounting, human resources, environmental health and safety, security, auxiliary services, budget, and physical plant; complemented by student affairs, and academic affairs areas such as the provost’s office, the office of curriculum and instruction, planning and institutional performance, academic advising, and potentially the office of sponsored research. Contact with the main campus, especially the colleges, will need to be mediated through on-site regional center staff to include at a minimum a director, a coordinator, and clerical/technical support. Additional staff can be added as individual center plans are developed, enrollments grow, and permanent facilities acquired.

A key consideration is whether or not projected operational costs are viable. One basic tenant for the expansion of the regional centers is that enrollment at each location shall be incremental to the current projected enrollment plans. The objective is to be certain that any enrollment growth funding allocated is not a diversion from the main campus, but rather an allocation to a given center based upon enrollment projections. Under this guideline, each center will not only serve to expand access to education in Southwest Florida, but will not be a draw against resources or revenues that compromise operations on the main campus.

An overview of funding indicates sufficient resources for regional center operations, when current funding mechanisms and on campus expenditures are reviewed. However, such analysis is only a framework and does not provide a “definitive” answer until all aspects of costing and revenue are identified. The University receives funding for each incremental FTE generated. Therefore, it is logical to be able to plan for funding for the centers on a per FTE generated. This methodology will firmly place the resources of new enrollment into the Centers.
Currently, the University is funded on a per FTE basis for marginal enrollment growth. The funding per FTE for fiscal year 06-07 is $8,568, based on the formula utilized in the legislative budget request. Based upon the most recent expenditure analysis submitted, Florida Gulf Coast University averages $5,227 per student FTE for direct instruction costs. When considering an indirect cost as high as 50% of the campus average ($3,120), the funding per FTE still exceeds estimated total cost by a reasonable margin. With this in mind, the feasibility of expanding the centers can be ascertained, but there are issues that will require review. Revenue generated through non-credit offerings, contracts, and auxiliary services can complement the state funding for each regional center.

Capital costs for facilities can be addressed through public/private partnerships such as those envisioned in Cape Coral, Charlotte County, and Naples.
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